

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TWO NEW HUMAN CASES OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

San Bernardino. The County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health has confirmed two symptomatic human West Nile Virus (WNV) cases in the cities of Barstow and Colton.

"San Bernardino County is seeing increased activity of WNV in birds, chickens and mosquitoes throughout the County. Therefore, it is important that the public takes appropriate precautionary measures to protect themselves against mosquitos," said Dr. Jeanne Rorabeck, Acting Health Officer with the San Bernardino Department of Public Health. "Individuals 50 years of age and older have a higher chance of getting sick and are more likely to develop serious symptoms when infected with WNV."

WNV is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito that has fed on an infected bird. Signs and symptoms of WNV may include fever, body aches, rash, nausea, vomiting and headache. Most people infected with the virus have no symptoms; however, some people may develop severe symptoms which can lead to brain inflammation or paralysis.

The most effective ways for individuals to prevent exposure to mosquito bites and WNV are:

1. **DAWN and DUSK** – Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active.
2. **DRESS** – Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long-sleeved shirts that are loose fitting and light colored.
3. **DRAIN** – Remove or drain all standing water around your property where mosquitoes lay eggs such as birdbaths, ponds, old tires, buckets, clogged gutters or puddles from leaky sprinklers.
4. **DEET** – Apply insect repellent containing DEET. When using DEET, be sure to read and follow the label instructions.
5. **DOORS** – Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes to prevent mosquitoes from entering the home.

We encourage the public to participate in the West Nile Virus surveillance program by reporting dead birds to the State West Nile Virus toll-free hotline at (877) WNV – BIRD or on-line at www.westnile.ca.gov.

For more information on West Nile Virus, please visit the San Bernardino County Mosquito and Vector Control Program www.sbcounty.gov/ehlus/environmental_health_services_home.aspx, or call the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health Communicable Disease Section at 1 (800) 722-4794, Monday – Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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